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DEFINING
PLANNING AREAS

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ONTARIO DEPARTMENT OF MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS
801 Bay Street,
Toronto 5, Ontario

February, 1971

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PROCEDURES FOR OBTAINING DEFINITION OF PLANNING AREAS

Planning Areas

The official plan is now recognized as an essential tool for establishing municipal development policy and for co-ordinating the programs and activities of the various public agencies and private interests whose decisions affect the quality of growth and renewal of the community. In Ontario, official plans can be prepared only for planning areas defined by the Minister of Municipal Affairs under section 2 of The Planning Act. With the exception of regional municipalities and certain other municipalities that have been created by special legislation recently, a planning board must be set up in the planning area before a proposed official plan can be prepared, adopted, and approved.

Planning areas fall into three main categories, namely:

- (a) single, independent -- where the planning area is to consist of part or all of one municipality only;
- (b) subsidiary -- where the planning area is to consist of part or all of one municipality that is already included in a larger planning area; and
- (c) joint -- where the planning area is to consist of more than one municipality.

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for instance, he is responsible for the distribution
of the medical knowledge and practice of his
own country and to maintain the respect of mankind
for his own nation and its knowledge. The
object of the Association is to further the welfare
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Section 2 of the Act provides that "The Minister, upon the application of the council of a municipality or the councils of two or more municipalities, or upon his own initiative where in his opinion it is in the interest of any area, may define and name a planning area." In addition, the Act provides that the planning area shall consist of part or all of those municipalities that, in the opinion of the Minister, constitute a complete planning unit.

The definition of a new planning area has very important implications for the municipalities included and for their residents. It means that a commitment has been made to:

- appoint a planning board and give it the financial resources and the support it will need to carry out its responsibilities;
- carry out an effective and continuing planning program;
- adopt an official plan embodying sound policies designed to promote optimum social, physical, and economic conditions in the planning area;
- enact zoning by-laws and other regulations and carry out various public works necessary for the implementation of the official plan.

Applications

To enable the Minister to make an effective decision, municipalities are requested to furnish the following information

when making formal application for the definition of a planning area:

1. The territory to be included within the planning area;
2. The name to be given to the planning area and planning board;
3. Where a joint planning area is to be formed, the municipality to be named the designated municipality;
4. The composition of the planning board. In the case of a joint planning board, the number of members proposed to represent each municipality should be indicated;
5. A commitment to the preparation of an official plan covering the entire planning area and supporting comprehensive zoning by-laws (or revisions of existing zoning by-laws) for each municipality within the planning area;
6. The estimated cost of carrying out the planning program over, say, the next five years and a projection of the annual budget to be allocated to the planning board each year for this purpose;
7. A commitment to provide adequate financial resources to the planning board to enable it to carry out an effective and continuing planning program and to permit the planning board to carry out the duties assigned to it by section 10 of The Planning Act.
8. An understanding that technically-qualified planning staff will be engaged to assist the planning board in carrying out the planning program or, alternatively, that the services of a planning consultant will be retained;

9. In the case of a joint planning area, an indication of how the costs of the planning program are to be apportioned among the participating municipalities;
10. Where a joint planning area is to be formed and there are planning areas and planning boards already in existence, an indication as to whether the existing planning areas and planning boards are intended to be dissolved or whether they are intended to continue as subsidiaries.

The formal application to the Minister should be in the form of a resolution adopted by the council of each municipality to be included within the planning area and should set out as much of the above information as related to the type of planning area to be defined.

IMPORTANT

The Department of Municipal Affairs welcomes the opportunity of assisting municipalities that are considering setting up planning boards. Staff of the Department are available to discuss the appropriate boundaries for the planning area, the composition of the planning board, the kind of planning program to be carried out, the securing of planning staff or consultants, the financial arrangements that will be involved, and other details. Discussions with staff of the Department at an early stage, and certainly well before a formal application for definition of a planning area is submitted, will often avoid much delay and misunderstanding. They will also permit the staff of the

Department to inform municipal councils of any studies or planning programs that may be under way or contemplated that might have a bearing on a proposal to establish a new planning board to carry out a planning program. Consultation with the Department is particularly important in connection with proposals for new joint planning boards.

Enquiries should be addressed to:

Director,
Community Planning Branch,
Department of Municipal Affairs,
801 Bay Street,
Toronto 5, Ontario.



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